

## Closing Prayer Together

Dear Jesus, thank you for this time of prayer and for speaking to each of us in the depths of our hearts. Help us to respond to your word in our everyday life. Help us to grow in our relationship with you. Help us to become more missionary and more confident in proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. Help us to make our lives a gift for others in charity. Amen.



## Quotes on Lectio Divina from Pope Benedict XVI, Saint Pope John Paul II and Pope Francis

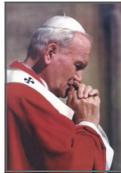
"I would like in particular to recall and recommend the ancient tradition of Lectio divina: the diligent reading of Sacred Scripture accompanied by prayer brings about that intimate dialogue in which the person reading hears God who is speaking, and in praying, responds to him with trusting openness of heart. If it is effectively promoted, this practice will bring to the Church ... a new spiritual springtime".

**Pope Benedict XVI. (2005). Address to the International Congress on Dei Verbum.**



"It is especially necessary that listening to the word of God should become a life-giving encounter, in the ancient and ever valid tradition of lectio divina, which draws from the biblical text the living word which questions, directs and shapes our lives".

**Pope John Paul II. (2001). Novo Millennio Ineunte.**



"There is one particular way of listening to what the Lord wishes to tell us in his word and of letting ourselves be transformed by the Spirit. It is what we call lectio divina. It consists of reading God's word in a moment of prayer and allowing it to enlighten and renew us.

**Pope Francis. (2014). Evangelii Gaudium.**



"In his Letter to Gregory, the great Alexandrian theologian gave this advice: "Devote yourself to the lectio of the divine Scriptures; apply yourself to this with perseverance. Do your reading with the intent of believing in and pleasing God. If during the lectio you encounter a closed door, knock and it will be opened to you by that guardian of whom Jesus said, 'The gatekeeper will open it for him'. By applying yourself in this way to lectio divina, search diligently and with unshakable trust in God for the meaning of the divine Scriptures, which is hidden in great fullness within. You ought not, however, to be satisfied merely with knocking and seeking: to understand the things of God, what is absolutely necessary is oratio. For this reason, the Saviour told us not only: 'Seek and you will find', and 'Knock and it shall be opened to you', but also added, 'Ask and you shall receive'".

**Pope Benedict XVI. (2010). Verbum Domini.**

# *Diocesan Spiritual Renewal Programme*



## **Participant Reflection Sheet**

### **Session One**

***"As we build new buildings and strengthen old ones, may we also experience the deeper renewal of ourselves as the Body of Christ.***

***Strengthen us in faith; renew us in your love; give us an unbreakable hope in your promise of eternal life."***

## Opening Prayer

God of Love

Through our baptism you have called each one of us into the Church in the  
Diocese of Christchurch.

You have endowed us with new life.

You have enriched us with the joy of life in your Son Jesus Christ.

You have poured out the Holy Spirit upon us.

As we build new buildings and strengthen old ones, may we also experience the deeper renewal  
of ourselves as the Body of Christ.

Strengthen us in faith; renew us in your love; give us an unbreakable hope in your promise of  
eternal life.

Help us to reach out to those in every kind of need and treat them with compassion,  
dignity and justice.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

## Diocesan Theme

The Catholic Diocese of Christchurch is a community of missionary disciples who love God, love  
each other, and go out to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all the World.

## Scriptures (choose one of the three below)

“Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of  
the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And  
know that I am with you always; yes, to the end time.”

**Matthew 28: 19 - 20**

“Lastly, he showed himself to the Eleven themselves while they were at table And he said to  
them, ‘Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation. He who believes and  
is baptised will be saved; he who does not believe will be condemned’ ... As so the Lord Jesus,  
after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven: there at the right hand of God he took  
his place, while they, going out, preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and con-  
firming the word by the signs that accompanied it.

**Mark 16: 15-16, 19-20**

Now having met together, they asked him, ‘Lord, has the time come? Are you going to restore  
the kingdom to Israel?’ He replied, “It is not for you to know times or dates that the Father has  
decided by his own authority, but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you;  
and then you will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judea and Samaria,  
and indeed to the ends of the earth. As he said this he was lifted up while they looked on, and a  
cloud took him from their sight. They were still staring into the sky when suddenly two men in  
white were standing near them and they said, ‘ why are you men from Galilee standing here  
looking into the sky? Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven, this same Jesus will  
come back in the same way as you have seen him go there.”

**Acts 1: 6 - 11**

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with permission of the publishers.

## The Steps of Lectio Divina

### **First reading of scripture / silent time**

“Jesus is sharing these thoughts with his friends in a real lived moment. Be conscious  
of a real moment in my life as I listen/read/reflect and allow a single word or  
phrase speak to me. Humbly allow the Holy Spirit to do his work within me.”

### **First sharing time**

Share your word or phrase with the group with no further discussion. *What touched  
my heart?*

### **Second reading of scripture / silent time**

As you listen / read / reflect a second time ask yourself the following; why has this  
word touched my heart? “*Let the word or phrase penetrate my heart, feelings, con-  
science or life experience*”. What is the Lord saying to you? What is he asking of you?

### **Second sharing time**

Share your word or phrase again in the group. You may wish to share why that particu-  
lar word touched your heart within the group in a time of general faith sharing.

### **Reflection questions**

1. What is the Lord saying to me at this time?
2. What touches my heart?
3. Do I see myself as a disciple of Jesus?
4. What do I understand by the term missionary disciple?
5. What does it mean to live and grow as a disciple of Jesus?

### **Closing Prayer**

During this time, form your word and reflections into a direct prayer to our Lord. Thank  
the Lord for the personal word spoken to you. You might like to read silently the reflec-  
tion below.

*“During this time of lectio – we make a personal heartfelt response to God speaking the  
Word to us.*

*If we experience our weakness and need, respond by asking his help.*

*If we experience the word as a promise, respond with joyful trust.*

*If we experience our sinfulness, respond with repentance.*

*If we experience being called to action, respond with willing generosity.*

*If we experience the word as a challenge, ask for courage to accept it.*

*“The process of lectio divina is not concluded until it arrives at action (actio)”, which  
should move us to make our lives a gift for others in charity.*

**Turn over the page for the final prayer together.**